

THE  
WIDOWES  
IOY.

OR  
CHRIST his comfortable  
SALVTATION

*To a comfortlesse Widow:*

Being  
Observations no lesse profitable then  
comfortable for the losse of our  
*deceased friends.*

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By W. C.

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LONDON,  
Printed for IOHN HODGETS.

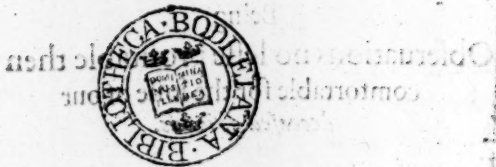
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*Sermons*  
4.

WIDOWS

the comfortable

To a comfortable Widow:



By J. C.



Printed for John Roberts

1844



LUKE 7. vers. 13.

*When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and sayd vnto her, Weepe not.*

**T**HE Prophet David tels vs, that *beauiresse* may endure for a night, but ioy cometh in the morning: and our Sauour himselfe pronounceth a blessednesse to them that *mourne*, for they shall be comforted: which comfortable doctrine hee hauing immediately in the Chapter going before deliuered in words, he doth now here by his deedes, make good on the behalfe of a poore Widow miserably mourning, and lamenting for the losse of the staffe and comfort of her life; her sonne, her onely sonne, now vpon the Biere, carying to the place of buriall: Whom when the Lord saw, he had compassion on, &c.

*The Lord*] This shewes vnto vs his power: [*saw her*] here is his prouidence: [*had compassion*] here is his mercy, power, prouidence, and mercy, meete all together to comfort this comfortlesse Widow, *Weepe not*. His power was seene in raising her dead sonne: his prouidence, in that hee saw her: his mercy, in commiserating her griefe; her griefe, and the death of her sonne, worke both together for her comfort: for *the Lord seeing her, hath compassion on her*: And thus are we brought into the Text.

Which I may fitly terme a Comedy; it begins with sorrow, and ends with ioy: acted by two persons, which I make the two parts of my Text: <sup>1</sup> a miserable woman [*her*] <sup>2</sup> a mercifull comforter, [*The Lord.*] The woman is a Widow, the comforter is Christ: The woman acting a mournfull Tragedie, Christ making it end with a ioyfull *Plaudite*: In the one there is great misery, in the other, endlesse and boundlesse mercy: Great misery; for here is a voyce heard of mourning,



ning, weeping, and great lamentation; a Widow weeping for her onely sonne, and could not be comforted, because he was not: greater mercy; for Christ *inwardly* puts on the bowels of *compassion*, and without any intreaty, restores miraculously life to her sonne, and vunexpectedly comfort to her selfe. First, of *her*, the woman, and her misery.

Touching the historie, it standeth thus: Christ hauing finished his Sermon in the Mount, he came downe vnto the citie of *Capernaum*, where hee healed the Centurions sicke seruant, and the next day he went vnto *Naim*, of which city this woman was an inhabitant: as he was entering into this citie, there met him a great multitude, carrying a Coarse, and this woman the mother, attending it with weeping eyes, whose misery, and cause of sorrow will appeare to be iust and great, if we doe weigh these subsequnt passages.

First this [*her*:] this woman was not of the meanest or inferiour sort of the peo-

ple of the Citie, whose daily wants and necessities so inures and accustomes them with patience to beare many crosses and miseries, insomuch that vnto them they seeme lesse burdensome: for *mali consuetudinem mali amaritudinem adimit*. And as they that are alwaies accustomed to liue in marsh and fennie places, are not so much offended with noysome foggie smells, as are they that liue in a more delicate and pure tract of ayre: So they whom their meanenesse of estate and condition, must many times make to want, yea in their greatest abundance to be full of wants, goe more lightly away with the burdens of miserie and misfortune, then such as haue these outward blessings of the world in greater abundance. This woman (I say) was not like in any probability to haue beene of the meaner and inferiour ranke; for then shee might haue beene better able to haue passed this sorrow, as necessitie had made *her* subiect to many a former: but shee was of good esteeme and account in the Citie, which  
may

5  
may bee gathered by this circumstance,  
that she went not alone, or with some few  
vnto the graue, but ~~with a~~ <sup>with</sup> a great troupe  
and multitude, which we know is either  
out of honour and loue to the deceased, or  
out of respect vnto the liuing : it  
could not bee altogether out of honour  
and respect to the dead, for hee was but  
~~man~~ <sup>man</sup>, a very young man, and not as yet  
of any desert in the Citie, and therefore  
we may more then probably coniecture,  
that it was done as an honour vnto this  
VVidow, the mother of this young man,  
being some honorable and wel-respected  
Matron; yet this woman shee loseth *her*  
sonne, shee feeleth the smart of misery.

To teach vs this lesson : That there is  
no sexe, no age, no estate or condition  
whatsoever, which is, or can bee exemp-  
ted from sorrow and miserie : not onely  
the poore begger that hath but from  
hand to mouth, but euen the greatest Po-  
tentate or Prince that euer liued, must  
haue his cares and causes of griefe. Crosses  
and afflictions are not tyed or limited to

any :

any climate or countrey, to any family or kindred : age cannot priuiledge a man, wisdom cannot protect, policie cannot preuent, riches cannot purchase immunitie; but as God causeth the Sunne to shine ouer all the world, on the vniust, as well as on the iust: so doth he send crosses, and causes of vexation and sorrow, as well to the honourable and rich, as to the poore and ignoble. Wee will looke no farther then to *Salomons* censure of this : *I sought in my heart to enioy whatsoeuer was had by any of the sonnes of men ; I haue made me great houses, &c. and whatsoeuer mine eyes desired, I with-held it not from them. Then I looked on all the workes that my hands had wrought, and on all the trauell I had laboured to doe, and behold, all is Vanity and vexation of spirit.* All those his delights and pleasures, riches and treasures, could not giue him so much content, as to counteruaile the sorrow, anxiety, and vexation of spirit which he was continually subiect vnto. And therefore Lawyers define life by weeping. The crying of children is a law.

lawfull prooffe of their liuing, to poffeffe the miferies of this world: and at our going out God is faid to wipe off teares, that is, to take away labour and sorrow together.

Whereby is iuftly reprooued the wonderfull fottifhneffe of worldly men, that dote fo much vpon the momentary and finfull pleasures of this finfull world, and looke for no other content, then what they make vnto themfelues in the enioyment of worldly things: Oh! how wonderfully haue men their hearts glued to e- uery fmall contentment they finde heere, and thinke if they haue gotten much goods, and ftore of treafure, and haue laded themfelues with honour and dignitie, that then they are out of the reach of croffes. No, let no man thinke thefe outward things to be any better then *Adams* figge leaues, to hide our nakedneffe, and to fheltervs from thofe croffes, which are incident vnto vs. Let no man put their trust in thefe, for they will prooue like *Vnto a Reede, on which if a man leane, it*

*will runne into his hand.*

Secondly, as this woman was wealthy and of good esteeme, so shee was a widow; shee had beene before a married woman, and as shee had participated of those blessings which attend VVedlocke, so shee had many times felt those cares, which are incident vnto those who haue the care and charge of a Family; and being made a mother, felt no doubt the trueth of Gods sentence, I will greatly encrease thy sorrow, in sorrow shalt thou bring foorth thy children; and yet to adde more vnto *her* griefe, and which may seeme the greatest griefe of all, *her* husband, one halfe of *her* selfe dyes; and that not in his old and decrepit age, when all his pleasure was gone, and life it selfe growne to be but labour and sorrow: but in the flower of his youth, and not long after his mariage, which probably may be gathered by this, that hee left but one onely sonne, and this our Sauour calles *Mary*, a yong Stripling, all which must needs make *her* widow-hood the more  
griuous

griuous ( widow-hood in it selfe beeing  
 a crosse great enough ) inſomuch that the  
 Prophet *David* reckoneth, and puts it a-  
 mong his Imprecations and curses on  
 Gods and his enemies. *Let his children bee* Pſal. 109.  
*fatherleſſe, and his wife a Widow.* So the Pro-  
 phet *Ieremie*, *Lam. 1. 1.* Lamenting and  
 bewailing, the miſerable eſtate of *Ieruſa-*  
*lem*, ſpeaketh thus; *How doth the citie re-*  
*maine ſolitary that was full of people.* Shee  
 is as a widow: And Chapter 5. 5. *Wee are*  
*fatherleſſe without fathers, and our mothers are*  
*Widowes*: yet all this while ſhe beares theſe  
 crolles manfully, ſhe yeelds not vnto the,  
 ſhee breakes not into open weeping, but  
 comforts her ſelfe, calling to minde thoſe  
 many and ſweet promiſes, and comforts  
 made by God vnto *Widowes*: for God  
 hath promiſed to defend the fatherleſſe  
 and widowes. *The Lord your God is God of*  
*gods, which doth right vnto the fatherleſſe an*  
*Widowes.* And *Pſalme 146. 9.* *The Lord kee-*  
*peth the Stranger, he releueth the fatherles and*  
*Widowes*; Yea, the Lord commits the care  
 of them vnto Magiſtrates, charging them

Deut. 27. 29.

and all others, *Ex. 22. 22. You shall not trouble the widow nor the fatherlesse childe: yea, the Lord out of his loue and care towards them, appoints part of the Tythe, for their reliefe. Deut. 14. 29. Hee would haue them to bee remembred in their Feastes; Hee menaceth a curse against him that wrongeth the widow: Cursed be hee that hindreth the cause of the stranger, the fatherlesse, and VVidow. And Ieremie 5. 25. hee reckoneth the neglecting of the widow, one cause of the destruction of the people.*

VVith these and many other promises which shee found in Scripture no doubt but shee did continually comfort *her* selfe in *her* widow-hood, that though shee were yong, yet she did not affect a second marriage, and besides shee tooke it as a pledge of Gods great fauour vnto *her*, that hee had giuen her a sonne to bee a stay, and a comfort vnto *her* in *her* widow-hood: But see, to adde yet more vnto the complement of *her* miserie; God, who knowes how to giue *vs* teares to drinke in measure, and knoweth best when he hath laid



laid sorrow & affliction enough vpon his children, leaues not the widow thus. As not shee, so neither are wee worthy to know whereunto wee are reserued. This *her* yong sonne dyes, who was the light of *her* eyes, and the ioy of *her* life. To shew vnto vs thus much by the way; that not onely old men must, but the yongest that is may die, wee are no sooner come into the world, but wee hasten out of the world: The pace of death is soft and sure, and euery man is a dying man till he be dead. And therefore, wee must so set our mortality before our eyes, as to thinke euery day our last day, and labour carefully to *redeeme the time* ill past, because so vncertaine is the time of our abode.

But what had this yong man done, thus vntimely to bee cropt off in the budde of his yeeres? Hee was but *naviger*, a very yong man, as his tender yeeres could not patronize good counsell, and want of grauitie giue authoritie to his person, to be a preident of vertue, so it is likely he was not yet misled by the errors of youth,

much lesse could hee haue beene a ring-leader vnto euill. Or why should we lay sinneto his charge, when the holy Ghost layes none; but rather charitably, yea confidently perswade our selues, that hee that was now about to doe so much for his body, had before done much more for his soule. Happily, God tooke him away, that hee should not see the euill to come. And truly, if the mother had rightly considered this, it had beene a cause rather to mitigate, then any way to exasperate or aggrauate *her* griefe, that God had so timely thus well prouided for her son; that though she had lost a sonne, yet heauen had found a Saint, and though hee had beene neuer so deare and precious in her eyes, yet to haue reioyced, that shee had *layd* ~~top~~ *her treasure in heauen*. Had hee beene an vnnaturall *Cain*, a prophane *Esau*, a proud aspiring *Abolon*, an vsurping *Adonyah*; this might haue redoubled *her* griefe, to consider, that from *her* loynes a chip should haue beene hewen, to make a fire-brand in hell. But to haue a godly  
yong

yong *Iosiah*, to be taken away in his tender yeeres, that he might not see the euill to come; might cause *her* rather to magnifie his mercie, then to whine vnder the rod of correction. And heereof should all parents make a comfortable vse, when at any time God shall deale with them in the like case, by remoouing their hopefull yong plants, from out of his nursery of grace heere, and transplanting them into his Orchard of glory in heauen, there to flourish as Palmes for euermore.

But had this her sonne bin taken away in his infancy, her sorrow had been the lesse; shee had sustained paine and sorrow in bringing him into the world, care and feare in his nurture and education, and now that shee thought to haue receiued some comfort in him, for whom shee had often both wearied, and disquieted her selfe; behold, he dyes.

Thus it pleaseth God many times to deale with his dearest children, to lay affliction after affliction, putting into all their cups of comfort and contentments,  
bitter

bitter drams of sorrow & griefe. Whence wee may learne, first how vncertaine a thing it is to expect any certaine comfort in this world, we are all subiect to vicissitude, change and alteration. We must not expect any perpetuity of felicity here, lest wee should forget to looke after any other heauen then heere on earth. Doe not we see by experience, that kingdomes haue their declensions, and Crownes and Scepters their crosses? and shall priuate and particular persons expect greater stability? Secondly, it must teach vs how to entertaine comforts, when God sendes them; euen as the Apostle bids vs the world, so to *use them, as though wee vsed them not*. So to resolute of them, as if to morrow we were to take our leaues of them. As crosses and afflictions are not of the nature of those diseases which men shall haue but once, and therefore wee are so to take our leaue of them to day, as to morrow to expect their returne: so on the other side those comforts which men enioy in this world, are not perpetuall residences.

fidenſaries, but euen like man himſelfe, of  
*ſhort continuance*, their *dayes are but a ſpan* Pſalm. 39. 6.  
long, they are alwayes *in tranſitu*, ſuddenly  
vanifhed and gone, and therefore we muſt  
reſolue no otherwiſe on their company,  
then of paſſengers and trauailers, heere to  
day, and to morrow no more ſcene.

Yea, but this was not all, it was not on-  
ly the fruit of *her* body that was thus vn-  
timely cut off, but it was *her* onely ſonne;  
the holy ghoſt emphatically addes, that  
ſhee was a *widdow*, and this was (*uenerabile*) *her*  
onely begotten ſonne, ſhee neuer had any  
other, *Solum hunc in doloribus nonerat, ſolum*  
*ſuis lactauerat uberibus*, neither had ſhe any  
hope of more, for *her* husband was dead,  
and this onely ſon left vnto *her* as a pledge  
and remembrance of *her* husbands loue;  
the ſight of whoſe louely face ſhe vſed (as  
*Saul* did *Dauids* muſicke) to drue away  
the vexing ſpirit of ſorrow and grieſe:  
yea more, ſhe was not onely hereby deſti-  
tute of comfort, but altogether hopeleſſe  
of poſterity; for this *her* ſonne was *baccu-*  
*lus ſeneſtus, ſtirps generis, ramuſculus ſucceſ-*  

C

ſionis,

*sonis*, and now the inheritance was left for  
*strangers* to inherit. Was not heere cause  
 of griefe? I might say, almost of despaire.

Tis true; yet happily God did deale  
 thus with her, euen because it was *her* on-  
 ly sonne, thereby to punish some sinne in  
 the mother; it may be she had taken too  
 much delight in this *her* sonne and there-  
 fore God caused *her* to sustaine much sor-  
 row for him dead, whom happily living,  
 she did too much affect; *her* motherly care  
 was turned into an ouer-prized indul-  
 gence; now God makes that *her* greatest  
 crosse, wherein she expected greatest com-  
 fort; because shee made that *her* pride,  
 which should haue bene *her* care. The  
 most louely flowers of hearts-delighting  
 ioy, eftsouones proue the vntimely and vn-  
 expected seedes of bitter sorrow, and God  
 willing to weane our childish affections  
 from that ouer-weening opinion we haue  
 of earthly delights, many times so brings  
 to passe, that in the fruition of what things  
 our ioy hath abounded, in the losse of the  
 same, our sorrow should much more a-  
 bound.

bound. But let not mee heere lay open a  
 pit of despaire for any afflicted soule, nor  
 adde sinne to *her* sorrow; the holy Ghost  
 layes none to her charge, then why should  
 I? but rather say with our Sauour, Nei-  
 ther did this yong man sinne, nor this wi-  
 dow, *but that the workes of God might be ma-* Iohn 9. 3.  
*nifest in them*, as hereafter wee shall heare.  
 Only let this teach vs Christian wisdomē,  
 so to temper our affections in a godly me-  
 diocrity, and so dispose & order our loue  
 and delight in earthly things, that it neuer  
 carry vs beyond Religion; beyond our  
 selues, so shall we make the yoke of Gods  
 afflictions easie vnto vs, so shall wee with  
 a great deale of patience part with our  
 greatest and most endeared delights.

Well, admit this was inflicted on *her* as  
 a punishment for her sinne, why was not  
 shee strooken with death herselfe, that as  
 liuing she could not expect many crosses,  
 so being dead, might neuer feelee more sor-  
 row? No doubt, *her* loue was as great to  
 this her only sonne liuing, and her sorrow  
 for him dead, as euer was *Dauids* to *Abso-*

a. Sam. 18. 33. *for when hee cryed, Oh my sonne Absolon, my sonne, my sonne Absolon, would God I had ayed for thee.* Had it been in her owne election, shee would haue redeemed *her* sons life with the losse of *her* owne. But God deales many times with his children, as wise Tutors vnto Princes children, strike them whom they most affect, and though hee doeth not correct them in his wrath and furie, yet he chooseth so to smite, the smart may longest remaine.

By this time I thinke you haue heard of a miserable (*Her*) a distressed widdow, and you may wel ioyne with *her*, and she with *Eliab*, *It is enough, O Lord, take my soule.* For it is not to bee doubted, but while *her* sonne lay sicke on his death bed, the mother sate dayly on or by the bed, with sad fighes, with feruent and deuout prayers, soliciting God, that now it was high time to put to his helping hand, and to bee mindful in the performance of those most gracious promises that he had made vnto widdowes, that now it was seasonable to make good that doctrine which the day before



before he had deliuered in words, *Blessed are they that mourne, for they shall be comforted*, but yet she is not heard, *her sonne dies*: By whose death shee was plunged into such a depth of griefe, and almost swallowed vp in a gulfe of despaire, that now shee could no longer containe, but needes must breake foorth into open weeping, manifestly shewing thereby, that either the promises of God were vaine, and of none effect, or that shee was cast off, and forsaken of God, and so his promises did in no wise appertaine vnto *her*: for these two (widdowhood, and want of issue) were accounted among the Israelites to be two great curses. Yet more, *her* misery was so great, that it moued all the Citie to commiseration: for they went out with *her* vnto the graue, and now there was no hope of any effect of Gods promises, touching comfort to this mournfull widdow.

VVhence we may learne, that God doth suffer his children many times to be so much crushed vnder the yoke of affli-

tion, and outward crosses in this world, that not onely to the eye of men they seeme to be forsaken, but euen in themselves they feele no comfort, find no hope. Thus was *Dauid* many times so heavily burdened, that hee seemed vnto himselfe, as though hee were forsaken: *Hath the Lord forgotten to be mercifull? hath he shut up his mercies in displeasure for euermore?* So our blessed Sauour himselfe when hee was in the flesh, felt the hand of his Father so heavy vpon him, that it made him in the bitternesse and anguish of his soule to cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* This is the doing of the Lord, and it may seeme maruailous in our eyes, vntill we consider the reasons; which may be reduced to these three heads:

First, because extremities are the best tryals of a Christians faith: ordinary crosses, as they are common, so is it more facile to beare them. To hope well when we see no danger, or to beleue Gods promises, when we see them either already performed, or at least a probable and likely

ly meanes to effect them; it is easie, any man can doe it: but to hope when we see no hope of safetie, and to beleue Gods faithfulnessse, when wee see no other meanes, but as to rayse children out of stones, to fetch water out of a flintie Rocke, to hold out a three yeeres famine with an handfull of meale, and a little oyle; here indeed is a true hope, and a noble tryall of a strong faith: for hope that is seene is no hope, and faith grounded on; or guided by the blind leader of carnall reason, is no faith. Thus God tryed *Abrahams* faith in that great extremitie, when he commanded him to offer vp his onely sonne. Thus was *Iobs* faith, patience, and constancie tryed by those extreme crosses on his bodie, goods, and children. God dealeth with his children, as Fencers with their scholars; they first begin with wooden cudgels, after they go to weapons with blunted edges and points, and last of all, as they grow in skill, and to put their skill to the tryall, they play at sharpe, and many times fetch blood.

blood. So God inures his children, first vnto pettie crosses, and so inflicteth greater and greater, at last hee will strike with the sharpe, and draw blood from their soules, onely to try what proficients they haue bene in the schoole of faith and patience.

Secondly, because hee would make the deliuerance the more ioyfull, when it doth come: for the greater are our afflictions, the greater shall be the waight of glory, and the more welcome vnto vs: as the Apostle speaketh concerning sinne in the godly: so it is true concerning affliction, God many times so bringing to passe, that where sorrow hath abounded, there ioy should much more abound: So that afflictions, they are but preparatiues to greater comforts.

Vintners we see oftentimes set before their guests that haue dainty palates, brinish and salt meates, that so their wine may haue the better taste and relish: So because it is mans nature too slightly to esteeme of the mercies, fauours, and comforts

forts of God, as either to forget, or to ex-  
tenuate and lessen them, hee doth many  
times giue them full cuppes of bitter sor-  
row, to the end that they may the more  
highly esteeme and prize his mercies and  
faouours when he bestowes them.

Thirdly, God seemes to leaue his with-  
out all hope of comfort, because they  
should ascribe all the praise and honour  
of their deliuerance vnto him onely. Man  
is of a dogged nature; as in aduersitie, like  
the dogge that snarles and bites at the  
stone, and neuer looks to the hand that  
threw it: so in prosperitie, when wee fare  
well, and obtaine any blessed and comfor-  
table deliuerance from any euill, wee are  
readie presently to share glory with God,  
saying, This haue I gotten by my care,  
indultrie, and wisedome, or else attribute  
it vnto second causes, and neuer looke vp  
vnto God to giue him the glorie. But let  
vs know, that God is a ielous God, he will  
not part stakes with any man; and there-  
fore he will many times suffer vs to sinke  
so low, that all meanes in the world shall  
D                      faile,

faile, before he will raise vs vp, to the end we may acknowledge, that God is aboue, and beyond all meanes.

2. Pet. 4. 12.

Iob 13. 15.

The vse of this shall be none other then those words of Saint *Peter*, *Dearely beloved, thinke it not strange concerning the fierie tryall which is among you, to prooue you, as though some strange thing were come vnto you: but put on Iobs resolution, Though the Lord slay me, yet will I put my trust in him.*

Thus haue you seene a tragicall scene of sorrow, personated and acted in and by a miserable and mournful widow, lamenting the losse of *her* onely sonne: now we are come to make it end in a ioyfull *plaudite*, while we looke vpon Christ *her* mercifull comforter; for hee seeing *her*, hath *compassion on her*, and sayth vnto her, *Weepe not.* Wherein wee may obserue these parts: 1. The time: *When the Lord saw her*: 2. The authour, *The Lord*: 3. Two antecedent causes of her comfort: first, Christ his omniscience or prouidence, hee *saw her*; and this I may call the seed of her comfort: secondly, his mercy, *he had compassion*.

*passion on her* : and this I may call the ground, into which it was cast, and where it tooke roote. 4. The comfort it selfe, which is first verball onely, *Weepe not*: and here it is sprung into a blade : Secondly reall; for she receiued her sonne againe, as the History sheweth : and thus it is growne to an eare.

*When the Lord saw her.* Was there a time when Christ did not know *her* miserie? no : Christ knew before hee came to see *her*, and by his Almighty power, whiles her sonne lay vpon his death-bed, could haue preuented his death, and his mothers sorrow, but he deferres it vntill this time; to teach vs this lesson; That God alone best knowes when to wound, and when to heale; when to kill, and when to make aliue, when to afflict with sorrow, and when to send comfort : we are not to limit God to times and seasons, nor yet to prescribe vnto him when wee should haue deliuerances from dangers, and comfort in crosses and afflictions. *My times* (saith *Dauid*) that is, times of prosper-

rity and aduersity, *are in thy hand*: that is, to order and dispose according to thy wisdom, to thy good will and pleasure. And therefore though the Lord may seem a long time not to giue audience, nor yet to behold the afflictions of his Saints; yet there wil come a *when*, a time, that will bring comfort vnto them.

*The Lord*: Heere is the Author. All true & sound comfort comes from God in *Christ*, and from him onely is to bee expected; hee is the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort: it is hee that sendes comfort in afflictions, yea life in death it selfe, by his power and mercy hee sweetens the bitter waters of death, with the wood of his Crosse, making that which is seene, as *though* it were not: so that though he hath not taken away death it selfe, yet he hath taken away the tyrannicall power of death, insomuch that through him wee may insultingly say, *Oh death where is thy sting*. Christ is the true hearbe of grace, which doth mitigate (if not wonderfully sweeten) all those cups of gall and vinegar,



ger, which are the *portion* and the *portion*, of the children of grace here, before they can be the children of glory in heauen.

The Vse whereof is, first, to stirre vp euery one of vs, to seeke onely vnto God for comfort, and to satiate and delight our selues onely in him, as in the God of all comfort and consolation: If hee send vs comfort, if he be the rocke vpon whom wee build our consolation, no affliction can discomfort vs, no feare can afright vs, nor death it selfe can dismay or appall vs; vnto him therefore, and onely to him, let vs seeke for comfort.

Secondly, heereby is discovered and reprooued, the vngodly practise amongst many now adayes, that in the time of sorrow in stead of going to God for comfort, they runne a cleane contrary way to the deuill. They will goe to an Ale house to drinke away sorrow, or else get themselves into some iouiall company, and to passe away the time. And so likewise, in the time of sickenesse, in stead of looking vp to heauen, they take hell for comfort;

by seeking to beguile the time, and passe away the tediousnesse of the paine, with idle tales, cardes, dice, or some such like vanitie.

Thirdly, it yeeldes matter of comfort vnto Gods children, when they shall consider that God is their comforter, what need they feare, who bee their tormentor? If wee had the keeping of this comfort in our owne hands and hearts onely, as *Adam* had his innocency, wee might easily leese it as *Adam* did his, and *Satan* who was euer enuious of mans good, would be ready to picke and steale it away from vs; but God keepes it for vs in heauen, and as hee did vnto the children of Israel in the wildernesse, daily renew showres of *Manna*, so doth he distill drops of heauenly comfort daily, into the hearts of true Israelites, in this their wildernesse, and vale of teares.

Thus of the Author, now of the Causes: The first antecedent cause, or the seed of the womans comfort was, that *the Lord saw her*. As not shee, no more can any Saint

Saint of God be in any distresse, but hee sees it, and good reason; *for he that made the eye, shall not he see? He that made the eare, shall not he heare? and hee that made the heart, shall not he vnderstand* the sorrowes of euery afflicted soule? Yes, he sees, he heares, he vnderstands all. Neither comfort, nor blessing, crosse, nor curse can come vnto vs, but by Gods prouidence and fore-sight: not a haire of our heades can be diminished, nor a cubite can be added vnto our stature, without the prouidence of our heauenly Father. It is neither constellation of starres, influence of the Celestiall bodyes, coniunctions of Planets, nor any such notionall fantasie of a Mathematicall braine, that can worke our weale or woe. It is not the malice of the deuill, or wicked men, can hurt Gods Church, or children; for God sees, his prouidence is aboue all. And this prouidence of God, hath as well a restraining, as ordaining power: for if either strength, or policie, could preuaile against Gods Church it could not stand, if either  
the

the curses of men, or the indeauours of the powers of darknesse should bee effectuell, all would bee hell: but God sees, and his prouidence disposeth.

*The Lord sae her;* Hee did not shut his eyes, nor turne his backe vpon *her*, but *sees her*, takes especiall notice of *her*; to teach man what hee should doe, to turne his eyes from beholding vanitie, & looke vpon the poore saints of God in miserie. What's the reason men should now adayes, so much degenerate frō *Christ* their Lord? Men now adayes are growen like the Ostrich, that while her egges are in the sand, shee will not looke on them; shee leaues them, she forgets them. When the clouds of aduersitie arise, mens sights are dimmed, they cannot see: when *Dauid* is in aduersitie, *his friends and his acquaintance stand as farre off*; What's the reason? Surely, men either haue their eyes, through selfe-loue turned inward, onely to looke vpon themselues; or els the profits and pleasures of this world, play the *Philistims* with *Sampson*, cleane put out their

their eyes, and so they are become idoles; eyes they haue, and see not the miseries of Gods saints. Let such take heed, least the Lord giue them also a sorrowfull mind, and a trembling heart, and they looke for comfort in vaine, till their eyes fall out. Deut. 28. 61. For hee that hideth his eyes from the poore, shall haue many curses.

*The Lord saw her*: Marke the gradation which heere the holy Ghost vseth, it is worth the noting, hee spake comfort vnto this woman, *WVeepe not*. But first, *hee had compassion on her*, and before hee had compassion on her, he *saw her*; not that any thing in God is first or last, for all things with him are coeternall, and admit no prioritie of subsistence, but onely as hee doth actuate them towards men. First, *hee sees*, then hee is *mooued with compassion*, then hee speakes comfort, *WVeepe not*.

To shew vs that God may *see*, though hee haue not *compassion*, hee may haue *compassion* though hee doe not presently comfort; if hee comfort not, yet hee may haue *compassion*; and though he shew not

*compassion*, yet certainly hee *sees*: which may serue for admirable comfort to Gods children, when the swelling waters of sorrow are cleane gone ouer their soules; though the Lord doth not presently send thee comfort, yet hee may haue *compassion* on thee; and though as yet hee hath not *compassion*, yet certainly he *sees*: and seeing thee is a cause to moue him to *compassion*, and his *compassion* will certainly in the ende bring comfort. The like gradation God vseth in his iustice, towards sinners, which may be a terrour to euery impenitent person; first he seeth their sinnes, then his wrath is kindled, and his *iealousie waxeth hot*, and then hee strikes, and therefore though hee doeth not plague a sinner presently, yet hee is angry, and though hee seeme not to bee angrie, yet certainly hee sees him, and the sight of his sinnes will kindle his wrath: and *who knows the power of his wrath?* surely it will beeing a fearefull iudgement.

Secondly, God doth first *see* our misery,  
before

before hee is moued with *compassion*, and send comfort? let it teach euery Christian that desires comfort; first of all to make his misery knowen vnto God. We are all beggers, and they we know vse to lay open their vlcers and sores, to mooue the passengers *compassion*. Let vs not bee so proud as to scorne to lay open our wants vnto God, for except God *see* our misery, how can hee haue *compassion*? to conceale thy misery from God, is to stop the fountaine & well-head of Gods mercie. The Prophet *Dauid* proues the truth hereof vnto vs, *When I held my tongue*, that is, while I concealed my misery, and did not make it knowen vnto God, *my bones consumed*: that is, my sorrow increased, I found no comfort, *then I acknowledged my sinne vnto thee*, neither hid I mine iniquity, for I thought, I will confesse against my selfe my wickednesse vnto the Lord, and thou forgauest the punishment of my sinne. Vpon his confession God *saw* his misery; *seeing* it, was moued with *compassion*; and this brought comfort. It was his practise: for *Psal. 51.*

before, in the 12. verse he prayes, *Restore unto me the ioy of thy saluation.* In the 5. vers. he first inuites God to see and looke vpon his misery, *Behold, I was borne in iniquity, and in sinne hath my mother conceiued me.* God grant the like practise may be ours.

*The Lord saw her.* God hath a fourfold eye: First of Maiesty, Secondly of Iustice, Thirdly, of Prudence, Fourthly, of Compassion. With the first he looks on himselfe only, and this no man can see and liue, as God told *Moyes*. With the second hee lookes vpon sinne and sinners, and this is an eye of terror, it sparkles with fire of reuenge, in regard whereof, euery man hath cause to pray, *Turne thy face away from our finnes.* With the third, hee lookes on all his workes, and by it hee ordereth all things in weight and measure. With the fourth, he lookes on the fatherlesse and widdowes, and all his poore and needie Saints: for seeing them, hee hath compassion on them, and they like the Sunne in the Firmament giues both life and light to all sublunary bodies, by this  
is.



is euery afflicted soule abundantly reioyced, and inuited with boldnesse to come vnto the Throne of grace, and cry *Abba, Father.* And for this may euery sinner safely pray, Lord shew vs the light of thy countenance. Graciously looke vpon our afflictions, Pitifully behold the sorrowes of our hearts. And with this eye did hee looke on this widdow: for seeing her, *he had compassion on her.* Heere is the second antecedent cause of this womans comfort, and may be called *causa subalternata*, as Logicians terme it, because it is both an effect, and a cause, an effect, in respect it proceeded from Christ his seeing her, and a cause, in that it produced and effected her comfort. First let vs consider it an effect: Christ did not *see her* in misery and passe by her without any regard, but *compassion* puts on the bowels of *compassion*, and is touched with the sence of her sorrow, *when he saw, he had compassion on her.* The Priest may see the wounded man, and passe by on the one side, the Leuite may come neere the place, goe and looke.

on him, and passe by on the other side, but the good Samaritane Christ Iesus, *when he sees him, he hath compassion on him.*

The vse hereof is for exhortation, with those words of the Apostle, *Let the same minde bee in you that was euen in Christ Iesus.* If wee are Christians, let vs imitate our Master Christ Iesus. *Hee saw her*, but what manner of sight was this? There is a good sight, and a bad sight. The good sight is threefold, First, of discretion or discerning. Second, of contemplation. The third, of commiseration; the last is the best, especially when it hath the misery of Gods Saints for its object: and the brighter our eyes are thus to see, the neerer wee come to God the Father, who is the God of mercy; and to God the Sonne, our Lord and Master, who neuer sees his seruants in misery, but *in compassion, hath compassion on them*, and to God the holy Ghost, who is the comforter. But men now a dayes are quicke sighted, but slow to haue compassion. They see as *Cham* to deride, as *Michal* to mocke, as *Iobs* friends, to espie out their

their finnes, to aggrauate their infirmities, to adde to their sorrow, to trample vnder their feete the comfortlesse and dejected soule, in stead of powring wine and oyle into their wounds like Christ, like his tormentours giue *gall and Vineger to drinke*. Is this Christianisme? t's contrary to the practise of Christ. Is it Religion? no; for *pure Religion before God the Father, is to visit the fatherlesse and widdowes in their aduersity*. Surely then we may conclude, that more beare the name, then haue nature from Christ; more professe, then practise Religion; otherwise how can vve behold the misery of Gods Church and children vvithout compassionate, and relenting hearts? How can we see the afflictions of *Ioseph*, and yet *drinke wine in bowles*, and *sing to the sound of the viall*? How can wee see those *Foxes which destroy the Vineyard*; and not be moued with compassion to pray vnto our Spouse to *take them*? How can wee see that man of perdition *Sampson-like* send Foxes with firebrands in their tayles into the Lords corne, and  
 not

not be moued with *compassion* to pray *unto the Lord of the haruest*? How can we see in our neighbouring countreyes abroad, the beauty of *Sion* to bee defaced, and her walles beaten downe almost euen with the ground, and not be moued with *compassion*, nor haue any pity on the dust thereof? Let vs beware lest the like happen vnto vs, and there bee none to pity, nor to haue compassion on vs. How can we at home see so many poore, needy, naked, sicke, and comfortlesse Christians lie in misery and want, and we passe by like so many Priests and Leuites vwithout any remorse, any *compassion*? *Blessed are the mercifull, for they shall obtaine mercy*: mercy and compassion it is one badge of a true Christian heere on earth, *by this shall men know that you are my disciples, if yee loue one another*. It is the only Brand-mark that I read of, by which Christ at the last day shal know the sheep from the goats, *Come yee blessed of my Father, for I was hungrie and yee fed mee, naked, and yee clothed mee, in prison and yee visited mee.*

He

*He had compassion on her* : Now consider it, as it was a cause of her comfort, or as the ground whereinto the seed of her comfort was cast and tooke root. Christ was not sent vnto, to come to rayse her dead sonne, and being come, was not intreated or sued vnto, but voluntarily, and out of his owne accord; for hee was moued with *compassion*, it was his mercy and *compassion* that was the cause of her comfort. To teach vs, first, that what blessing or comfort soeuer either spirituall or temporall we enioy, Gods mercy is the cause of it. It must bee his mercy alone, that must feoffe vs in all blessings and comforts whatsoeuer, and except this mercy of God in Christ, feoffe vs in blessings and comforts, as our sins do in crosses & curses wee perish. Secondly, that God of himselfe is so ready to haue mercy that *before we call he will answere; and whiles wee speake, he will heare*: he loues not onely to exceed our sinnes, but our very desires in mercy. Thirdly, we may see the gradation of Christ his loue to his saints, descending

vpō them by a ladder frō heauen, by three  
 steppes or rounds: <sup>1</sup> in heart, <sup>2</sup> in word,  
<sup>3</sup> in deed: in heart, for *he hath compassion*:  
 in word, with a *noli flere*, *weepe not*: in  
 deed, for hee restored her dead sonne to  
 life, but first it beginnes at the heart. Phi-  
 losophers teach vs, that life naturall first  
 begins at the heart; so grace, the life spiri-  
 tuall, is first seated in the soule; the heart is  
 first mooued to *compassion*, then the tounge  
 to pitie: for (*ex abundantia cordis*) out of the  
*aboundance of the heart*, the tongue speaketh;  
 and hee that hath not a compassionate  
 heart, cannot haue a pitifull tongue, but  
 from the teeth outward, and not to speake  
 comfortably, or shew comfort, by word  
 or deed, or both, is an euident signe of a  
 hard heart; and from hardnesse of heart  
 good Lord deliuer vs.

You haue heard the causes of her com-  
 fort, Christ his *seeing* her, & Christs *com-  
 passion on her*, now heare the effect of both,  
*he saith vnto her, Weepe not. Hee saw her*:  
 here the comfort was but in the seed. *Hee  
 had compassion*: there the seed was cast in-

to the ground, and tooke deepe roote.  
*Weepe not*: here it is sprung into a blade.  
 This good Samaritan Christ Iesus, contenteth not himselfe to see this wounded woman, (for indeed she had a *wounded spirit*) and to haue *compassion on her*, but goes vnto her, bindes vp her wounds, poures wine and oyle into them, and takes care for her farther comfort, *weepe not*. To teach vs, that it is not sufficient for vs, when we see any in miserie, onely to be moued with compassion, but wee must speake some *words of comfort in due season*: it is the Apostle his rule, our tongues must vtter the tender affections of our hearts; and our hearts, as they are, or should bee the ground, where mercy must roote, must sometimes shew, that there is life, by sending forth some buddes into the tongue, which is the hearts best interpreter, and commonly speakes the language of the heart; if the heart conceiue *compassion*, the tongue must vtter *weepe not*.

*Weepe not*. Here comes our Sauour now, and makes good in performance his

comfortable doctrine; which was in words and promises; *Blessed are they that mourne*: hee comes with a towell in his hands, and wipes away the brinish teares from the blubbered and furrowed cheeks of this sorrowfull widow, and turnes her sadnesse into gladnesse, her fasting into feasting; her sobbes and sighes, into songs and prayses of deliuerance: such is the power, prouidence, and mercy of our gracious Lord, and mercifull Sauour, to rayse vp vnto his children in the midst of sorrow, sudden and vnexpected comfort.

But here some sad deiected Christian, co-partner with this widow in the same or-like cause of griefe, may yet refuse to be comforted, and iustifie both the cause and act of sorrow: for the Prophet *Esay* complained in his dayes, that *the righteous man perished, and no man considered it in his heart*: besides, it is not found through the whole sacred Storie of our Sauours life, that euer hee was seene to laugh, but to weepe often: and besides all, this woman  
lost



lost her sonne, and therefore a senslesse  
 stupiditie in her, not to haue mourned,  
 would haue argued not onely want of  
 loue, but of nature and humanitie; or to  
 haue had *in vesp' 1900*, courage aboue and be-  
 yond the strength of nature: for how qui-  
 et soeuer the morall Doctors haue made  
 themselues, yet their rules haue neuer  
 counteruailed all their troubles. The wi-  
 sest and most resolute Moralist that euer  
 was, look't pale, when he was to taste his  
 poysonfull Hemlocke, and why? because  
 to grieue at crosses, and to feare death is  
 naturall, is to bee a man; why then doth  
 our Sauour forbid her, saying; *Weepe not.*

We must know for all this, that the God  
 of nature will haue vs sometime, (though  
 not to deny) yet to curbe nature; and  
 grace must teach vs to doe that sometime  
 which nature cannot, for courage and  
 constancie against all crosses, and then to  
 be least shaken, when most assayled, com-  
 meth from the rules of an higher art then  
 naturall wisdom was euer able to teach.  
 Not that grace would make a man not be

affectionate, as not to mourne with them that mourne, and *weep with them that weepe*; for euen this is a lesson which euery man must learne in the schoole of grace; but direct vs to moderate the inordinate, and ouer-passionate affections of nature, that they should not *meurne as men without hope, for them that sleepe in the Lord.*

*Weepe not.* Here (mee thinkes) I am taken with admiration, to conceiue in what amazement this sorrowfull soule, and all the mournfull company stood, to see one silly man, and that a stranger, to come with such a song of melody into a *house of mourning*, and to present such a dissonant and discording dittie to so dolefull a tune; and yet I cannot chuse but admire more, how suddenly their sorrow was turned into comfort, and mourning into mirth; while I consider, who it is that sayes vnto her, *weepe not. Vox hominem sonat, oh Deus certè*, the sound of the voyce bewrayes him to be a man, but the matter that he speakes, *mightily declares him to be the Sonne of God.* God speakes by his Sonne,

Sonne, the brightnesse of his glory, and the engraued forme of his Person, out of his Word vnto all, both good and bad: but it is not the sound of the voyce of God, but the matter which he speaks, that argues loue: he may speake vnto an enemy as vnto Satan, *Satan whence comcest thou? Iob 1.* in anger, as vnto Adam, when he called him to an account, *Adam where art thou? Gen. 3.* He speakes peace to none but to his owne: it is vnto them and vnto their soules that he sayes, *I am thy saluation*: It is with them that hee doth indent, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*: and happy that soule vnto whom in the midst of sorrow, Christ shall vter this comfortable voyce, *Weepe not.*

The Church of God is compared to a ship sayling on the sea; euery Christian is a passenger in this Vessell, Christ is the Pilot and Steeres-man, he still sits at the Helme, let the weather be neuer so foule, let the sea and waues of crosses rise one vpon another with neuer such swelling surges, yet if my Sauour say vnto my soule,

soule, *I am thy saluation*, I will neuer despair, if my steeres-man say vnto mee as vnto his Disciples, *Feare not*, *O yee of little faith*, that little faith I haue shall make me so confident as not to be dismayed, if my Sauour meete mee, though not in the flesh, yet but in his word, as he doth here this comfortlesse widow with a *noli flere*, *weepe not*, though he take away from mee father or mother, brother or sister, my nearest and dearest comfort in the world, I will not mourne as without hope, but comfort my selfe in his comfortable promises.

Thus haue you seene a sorrowfull mother, following *her* dead sonne with tearedewed cheekes, a passionate multitude attending this pensiue widow, a compassionate Lord stopping their mouthes, wiping their eyes, and cheering their hearts, with a comfortable *noli flere*, *VVeepe not*. But this is not all, let me adde something farther then my Text, yet not beyond the Text, for t'is in the Hystory hee gaue *her* sonne aliue againe; and thus the blade

is growne to an eare, from a verball to a reall comfort. To teach vs first, that it is not sufficient for vs to haue a tender heart and a bemoaning tongue, to those that are in want and miserie, but our handes must be enlarged, our hearts towards poor needy Christians must be so affected, that some worke of charitie and mercy, might be effected.

Secondly, and for conclusion of all, whereas this woman in the depth of *her* sorrow found comfort, and the yong man in the midst of death found life, we may learne, that both to liue, and to liue comfortably, are in, and from *Christ* alone.

But some sorrowfull soule may yet farther obiekt and reason, that well might this woman receiue a great deale of comfort, for shee had the reall and bodily presence of *her* blessed Sauour, whose very lookes were able to reuiue a drooping and languishing soule; and besides to his presence, he annexed his Power, miraculously raising her dead sonne to life, and thereby vnexpected comfort to her selfe,

but now *Christ* is ascended into heauen, and there shall remaine till his second comming; besides miracles are now ceased, how then shall I by this example any whit comfort my selfe; how shall I expect restitution of my losse, restauration of my comfort.

I answere, these doubts proceed but from the weaknesse of our faith; shall the eyes of the body minister comfort to the soule, and shall not Faith the Eye of the soule doe much more? Rubbe but the scales of infidelitie from these eyes; and then, euen now by faith thou mayest see thy Sauour, sitting at the right hand of God, making continuall intercession for thee. But why doe I grant that *Christ* is absent from his Church and children? Hee is not; as *Abraham* in the Parable answered *Diues*, *They haue Moses and the Prophets*, so I say, wee haue *Christ* still; haue we not his owne promise: *Loe, I am with you to the end of the world*. Doth hee not daily speake vnto our soules, by the Spirit, the Comforter, and to our eares by his holy word, as comfortably as euer  
hee

hee did vnto this woman, when hee sayd  
 vnto her, *Weepe not.* May not wee daily  
 heare him say; *Blessed are the poore in spi-  
 rit; Blessed are they that mourne for they  
 shall bee comforted; Come vnto mee all yee  
 that are heauy laden, and I will refresh you, and  
 you shall finde rest vnto your soules.* As for  
 the comfort this woman had, by the rai-  
 sing of *her* dead sonne, know, that this  
 was but a temporall and short life, and  
 when hee badde *her* not to weepe, this  
 comfort was as short, if not shorter then  
 the former; for certainly afterwards so  
 long as shee liued, shee would haue cause  
 to weepe, by daily renewed causes of sor-  
 row. But wee howsoeuer wee loose our  
 friends now, shall one day see a more blef-  
 sed raising of them, neuer any more to  
 bee deprived of their societie: and then  
 shall *Christ* pronounce words which shall  
 bring more durable comfort then these  
 to this woman, for then shall *all teares bee  
 wiped from our eyes* neuer to feelee more sor-  
 row. Till which time the Lord giue  
 vs grace to liue religiously, and to wait  
 patiently.

FINIS.